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PERMANENT MISSION OF PORTUGAL TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT

BY

THE DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PORTUGAL

MR. FILIPE DE ALBUQUERQUE

IN

THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION

WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION

OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF

INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES

AND PEOPLES

ON

EAST TIMOR

August 13th 1987

Mr. Chairman,

I would like at the outset to place on record the appreciation of my delegation for the competent and dignified manner in which you, together with the other members of the bureau, have been conducting the proceedings of this Committee.

I don't need to recall the importance that my Government attaches to the work of this United Nations body and its contribution to the exercise of the inalienable right of peoples to self-determination and to the establishment of international cooperation to develop and encourage the respect for fundamental freedoms for all, irrespective of the size and level of development of the territory under consideration.

Reasserting in the strongest terms the need to ensure the respect of the principle of the right of the peoples to choose freely their own future is, in our view, as essential today as it was in the early days of the decolonization process when this Committee was created.

But, as we have often stated, the respect of this principle also implies that conditions should exist - or otherwise be created - for the free exercise of this right, lest it looses all its intrinsic significance and ceases to be a moral value to uphold.

... ...

Mr. Chairman,

Although being internationally recognized as the Administering Power in East-Timor, Portugal has been prevented from exercising its responsibilities under the Charter and namely under article 73 e) of the Charter, as is reflected in the working paper of the Secretariat (doc. A/AC.109/919). We have listened with great interest and taken note of the information provided to this Committee by a number of petitioners who have intervened in this debate, and whose account gives an indication of the situation prevailing in that territory.

I will dispense from further comments in view of the current phase of consultations in which we have embarked, in the wake of General Assembly resolution 37/30.

In this regard, we wish to stress our firm support for the action taken by the Secretary-General to promote a comprehensive solution to the problem within the framework of that resolution and we greatly appreciate the efforts undertaken by him in that direction in the last few years.

Mr. Chairman,

We are hopeful that the ongoing contacts will produce

.../...

tangible results, thus contributing to a global and lasting solution of the problem of East Timor. On our part, we will spare no effort to continue to defend the interests of the Timorese people and we renew our pledge to pursue a constructive engagement with all the parties concerned for the speedy attainment of that goal.

Thank You, Mr. Chairman